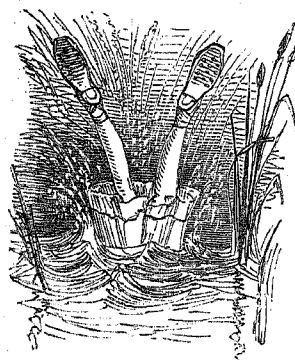


CLASSIC TALES.—No. IV.

THE STORY OF NARCISSUS.



IN THAT early period of the world's history in which the classic poets delight to lay the foundation of their tales, when the power of turning human beings into vegetables was still exercised by the gods, when the forests were inhabited by tawny individuals termed Satyrs, infinitely better tempered and more hilarious than any satirical productions of modern times, but whose principal infirmity appears to have been a delusion that they could

become intoxicated by squeezing grapes into their mouths (a theory which becomes absurd when reduced to practice); when Centaurs, an ingenious combination of the human with the equine animal, roamed the woods, when nymphs found lodging as well as board in the interiors of trees, and when more extraordinary races of human beings were to be seen gratis than have been met with in our own time at all the Greenwich Fairs that ever were,—there lived a youth named Narcissus.

He was not a wise child, and believed a river named Cephissus to be his father. As for his education, even for the time in which he lived (many centuries before the invention of anything) it was remarkably deficient. His costume was of the high classic style of art, consisting of a red table-cloth thrown over one shoulder, and a